restoration of forest wastelands in partnership with the State Forest Development Corporation;

(b) whether this has been opposed by environmentalists; and

(c) what action has been taken by Government in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH) :

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Some refrences have been received against such a proposal.

(c) Bearing in mind the large quantum of degraded forest land in the country, and the need to afforest it urgently so as to expand green cover, discourage encroachment and halt sail denudation, as also to meet rural fuel and fodder needs and to reduce pressure on existing natural forests. a proposal was considered to involve industry in afforestation of severely degraded areas, in partnership with State Forest Development Corpoartions, so as to augment the efforts of the Central and State Governments, NGOs and people's co-operatives. The matter was discussed at the recent Conference of Forest Ministers of States and Union Territories and at the National Environment Council. A scheme in this regard will be finalised only after careful assessment of various issues involved, including, inter alia, its legal aspects, its likely effect on rights and concessons being enjoyed by local villagers and tribals in forests areas and the requirements of scientific silviculture and biodiversity conservation.

Implementation of Social Forestry Programme

4595. SHRI RAHAS BIHARI BARIK: Will the Minister fo ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) what are the details of different plantation work under Social Forestry Programmes undertaken in Orissa since the beginning of the Seventh Five Year Plan;

(b) whether his Ministry has been constantly monitoring the implementaion of those programmes;

(c) if so, the progress made in the implementation of those programmes particularly in the tribal and backward districts of the State; and

(d) the details therof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH) : (a) Afforestation and tree planting activities, including social forestry, have been carried out in Orissa during the VII Five Year Plan under the schemes of the Central and State Governments like Rehabilitation of Degraded Forests, Drought Prone Areas Programme, Rural Employment Schemes, Fuelwood and Fodder Projects Scheme, Integrated Wastelands Development Project Scheme as also under the Orissa Social Forestry Project for which assistance was provided by the Swedish Internatoinal Development Authority (SIDA).

(b) The State Governments have their own mechanisms for monitoirng and evaluating the afforestation and tree planting activities. In addition, the afforestation and tree planting activities carried out under the 20-Point Programme are monitored by the Minnistry of Programme Implementation as well as the Ministry of Environment and Forests. For this purpose, the reports on the affrestation and tree planting activities are obtained from the State Governments on a monthly basis. Special studies to check the survival rates are also mounted through experts agencies. In respect of the externally-aided projects, the donor agencies mount their missions to make periodic evaluations of the progress made under the forestry projects.

Checking of the afforestation and tree planting activities undertaken in 1991-92 on Sample basis was carried out in selected districts in the country. In Orissa, the sample check revealed the following survival rate of the samplings planted :

Name of the district & % Survival rate

(i) Koraput—85-90%

(ii) Sambalpur—81%

It is also proposed to carry out such sample checks in selected districts in respect of the plantations carried out in 1992-93.

(c) & (d) During the VII Five Year Plan, the afforesiation and tree planting activities carried out under the 20-Point Programme in the Orissa State, including in the tribal and backward districts, covered 5.52 lakh hectares.

Mystery death of Peacocks

4596. SHRI IQBAL SINGH : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item which appeared in the 'Indian Express' dated 15th March, 1994 captioned 'Mystery death of 150 Peacocks';

(b) if so, the details thereof and reasons therefor; and

(c) what effective measures Government propose to find out the cause of the sudden death of the national bird in such a huge number ?,

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH) :

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The information in this regard has been called for from the State Government of Rajasthan and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Pollution in Thungabhadra River

4597. SHRI SATISH PRADHAN : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have received any reports on the evacuation of villagers in Dharwar District of Karnataka due to pollution of Thungabhadra River;

(b) whether it is a fact that entire marine life is destroyed due to concentration of Zinc and other non-degradable chemical compounds released in the river;

(c) whether Government have identified the source of contamination and

(d) if so, what action is taken against the offenders ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH) :

(a) Yes, Sir. The Government of Karnataka has issued and order dated 09-6-1993 to shift the Nalvagal village situated on the bank of Thungabhadra river, close to M/s Harihar Polyfibres and M/s Grasilene Division and also directed that the industries should bear the expenditure for shifting. This decision was taken by the Government of Karnataka to prevent the possible health hazard that may be caused due to pollution by the two industries. The Grasim Industry has obtained a stay order in WP No. 26710/93 from the Hon'ble High Court of Karnataka. The matter is pending.

(b) There is a report of fish death on 24-04-1994 in the Thungabhadra River. The exact reason is not known.

(c) The Karnataka State Pollution Control Board has been monitoring the effluent discharge into the Thungabhadra river by M/s Harihar Polyfibres and M/s Grasilene Division since its inception in 1974 to prevent contamination in the Thungabhadra river. It has taken continuous steps, whereby the industry at present has been able to meet 11 parameters out of 13 parameters prescribed and thus contained the pollution to a great extent. In respect of the remaining two parameters, the Karnataka State Pollution Control Board is pursuing with the industry to take appropriate measures whereby the standards for these parameters are met and thus reduce the contamination pollutation. The recent fish death is an unusual event and it appears to have been due to a fall in dissolved oxygen which is essential for fish life. The exact cause for fall in dissolved oxygen is not known.

(d) The Karnataka Board has filed cases against M/s Grasilene Division under section 33 & 44 of the Water Act 1974 which are pending before the court.